

# **Organic Livestock Certification**

If you are interested in obtaining certification as an organic livestock producer you will need to complete the Organic Livestock Production Management Plan and send it to our office along with the application, Site Information Forms, and Organic Production System Plan.

## **Organic Livestock Standards**

The National Organic Program (NOP) sections 205.236 — 205.239 contain the standards that need to be followed for organic livestock production. The standards include criteria for the origin of livestock, feed, health care, and living conditions. Substances that are allowed for health care, feed supplements, feed additives or for other purposes are listed in NOP sections 205.603 and 205.604.

## **Livestock Record keeping Forms**

The organic livestock standards require that accurate records are maintained. Enclosed are forms that you may use to maintain those records. You must maintain these records and have these records available at the time of inspection. Do not return these forms with your application.

## **Organic Livestock Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is organic livestock?**

Organic livestock production requires that animals be fed organic feed, have access to pasture or the outdoors, and prohibits the use of antibiotics and hormones. Organic livestock must be under organic management for a specific period of time, usually the entire life of the animal. Organic livestock operators must maintain or improve soil and water quality and provide living conditions and health care practices that meet organic standards.

### **Do I need to be certified?**

Certified organic means that an independent third party has verified that the organic standards have been met. All livestock producers that sell organic meat, dairy or other livestock products must be certified unless they sell less than \$5,000 annually directly to consumers.

### **What is organic feed?**

Organic feed is feed produced in compliance with the organic crop production standards. Feed includes forages, hay, silage, grain and any other material consumed by livestock. All organic feed must be produced without the use of synthetic chemicals for at least three years prior to it being consumed by organic livestock. The National Organic Program approves the use of some synthetic feed additives including vitamins and minerals. Approved feed additives are listed in NOP sec. 205.603(d).

### **Where can I obtain organic feed?**

Currently commercial suppliers of organic feed in the region include:

- Northwest Organic Feed, Endicott, Washington, 509-657-3400
- In Season Farms, Abbotsford, British Columbia, 604-857-5781
- Conway Feed, Conway, Washington, 360-445-5211 (dairy feed only)
- Grange Cooperative Supply, Central Point, Oregon, 541-664-1262 (dairy feed only)

## What are the requirements for different kinds of animals?

<b>Dairy Whole Herd Conversion</b>	
Feed	For herds converting to organic, requires 80% organic feed for the first 9 months followed by 3 months of 100% organic feed. After conversion all replacement animals must be organic from last third of gestation.
Antibiotics	Prohibited for one year prior to milking during conversion. After conversion antibiotics prohibited from last third of gestation.
Hormones	Prohibited for one year prior to milking during conversion, except for oxytocin for postpartum therapeutic use. After conversion hormones prohibited from last third of gestation.
Vaccinations	Vaccinations and biologics for endemic disease are approved.
Living conditions	Requires access to organic pasture.
<b>Dairy Split Herd Conversion</b>	
Feed	For converting a partial herd to organic management the animals must be fed 100% organic feed for 12 months.
Antibiotics	Prohibited within 12 months of organic milk production
Hormones	Prohibited within 12 months of organic milk production, except for oxytocin for postpartum therapeutic use.
Vaccinations	Vaccinations and biologics for endemic disease are approved.
Living conditions	Requires access to organic pasture
<b>Poultry (MEAT AND EGG)</b>	
Feed	Requires 100% organic feed from day old chicks to slaughter or egg production.
Antibiotics	Prohibited.
Hormones	Prohibited.
Vaccinations	Vaccinations and biologics for endemic disease are approved.
Living conditions	Requires access to the outdoors and direct sunlight.
<b>Slaughter Stock (BEEF, PORK, LAMB, ETC.)</b>	
Feed	Requires 100% organic feed from last third of gestation.
Antibiotics	Prohibited.
Hormones	Prohibited, except for oxytocin for postpartum therapeutic use.
Vaccinations	Vaccinations and biologics for endemic disease are approved.
Living conditions	Requires access to the outdoors. Organic pasture is required for ruminants.

**What kind of living arrangements are required for organic livestock?**

Organic livestock and poultry must have living conditions with access to the outdoors, shade, shelter and direct sunlight. Ruminants must have access to organic pasture. Temporary confinement is allowed only under specific circumstances, including inclement weather, stage of production, well being of the animal, or to protect soil or water quality. [NOP 205.239]

**What kind of health care medicine can I give to my livestock?**

A herd health program must include strategies for disease prevention, parasite control, and disease treatment as outlined in NOP 205.238. Vaccinations and veterinary biologics for endemic disease are approved. When preventive practices are inadequate to prevent sickness, synthetic medications may be administered only if approved under NOP 205.603. Organic producers of livestock products must not withhold disease treatment in order to represent the livestock product as organic.

**Do I have to apply every year?**

Yes, organic certification is an annual procedure. An application and fee must be submitted to WSDA every year. Please see the application for the fee assessment rates. Also, your organic livestock plan must be updated every year.

**What kind of records do I need to maintain?**

All organic stock must be individually identified with the exception of poultry, which may be identified by flock. Organic livestock producers must maintain the following records to insure a complete audit trail:

- 1) Organic livestock production system plan;
- 2) All medications administered (dates, dosages, and sources);
- 3) All feed bought or raised, and fed (receipts, sources, organic certificates, labels);
- 4) All feed supplements used (receipts, labels, sources, dates and quantity given to livestock);
- 5) The weight of slaughter animals at slaughter or hanging carcass weight;
- 6) Purchase and sales records for livestock and livestock products (dates, weights, quantities, description, etc.); and
- 7) All materials used in the on-site production of crops for feed (receipts, source, dates, & quantity applied).

**Does the slaughterhouse or custom slaughter operator need to be certified?**

Yes. All processors of organic products must be certified to process organic product. If your slaughter facility is not certified, they should contact our office at least three months prior to the slaughter of your animals.

**Currently certified processing facilities include:**

- Crescent Custom Meats, Sumner, Beef Cattle, Sheep, 253-863-6334
- Mondo Meats, Seattle, Beef (cut and wrap), 206-725-1565
- Kapowsin Meats, Graham, Hogs, 253-847-1777
- The Meat Shop, Tacoma, Beef, Pork, 253-537-4490
- Island Grown Farmers Cooperative, Lopez Island (mobile slaughter facility), Beef, Lamb, Pork, 360-468-4620

**Will my farm be inspected by WSDA?**

Yes. An Organic Food Program Inspector visits the farms at least once each year. The inspector will inspect the animal production areas, ask questions regarding the livestock production practices, and request to view the livestock production and sales records.

**How do I contact the Organic Food Program?**

**If you have any questions, please call the office at (360) 902-1805, FAX (360) 902-2087 or Email: [organic@agr.wa.gov](mailto:organic@agr.wa.gov) or to view the Organic Food Program website: [www.wa.gov/agr/fsah/organic/ofp](http://www.wa.gov/agr/fsah/organic/ofp). The National Organic Program rule is available on-line at [www.ams.usda.gov/NOP](http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOP).**

Enclosure(s): Livestock Production Management Plan  
Livestock Feed Record Keeping Form  
Livestock Pest and Disease Control Record Keeping Form  
Livestock Animal Inventory Record Keeping Form